Fever 1793

Story Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters 1-5**

1. Much of the first part of the story takes place in the Cook Coffeehouse. Describe the activities that go on there before, during, and after the guest arrive.

2. Toward the beginning of the story, Matilda wants to go to the market place in town. Why does she want to go there?

3. Have you ever lost a friend? How emotions do you think Matilda was feeling after finding out that Polly was dead?

4. What kind of talk are the townspeople having in the coffeehouse after hearing about the deaths around town?

**Chapters 6-9**

5. Why does Mother want Matilda to join her for tea at the Ogilivies’? Why does Matilda agree to join her that afternoon?

6. Describe the feeling Matilda had about attending the tea in the outfit she wore.

7. What do you think is the reasoning behind ringing the church bells to inform of the dead? Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not?

8. How did Matilda feel about taking care Mother that first night? Would you have felt the same way? Explain.

**Chapters 10-15**

9. Do you think it is fair of the town council of Pembroke to prevent fever victims from escaping the city of Philadelphia and entering their town? Why or why not?

10. When Grandfather and Matilda got left behind, what responsibilities did Matilda have to think about and do to take care of Grandfather?

11. On page 93, Matilda questions to herself saying, “What was wrong with the world? Would I next see birds flying backward, or cows crocheting doilies?” What led to Matilda wondering these things?

12. What did Mrs. Flagg do to take care of Matilda? Do you think in some way she also took care of Grandfather? How so?

**Chapters 16-20**

13. In good times, how are the farmers outside the city dependent on the city-dwellers of Philadelphia? How are the city-dwellers dependent on the farmers?

14. Besides food, how is city life different from living in the country?

15. What evidence is there in the story that Grandfather enjoyed his earlier years as a soldier?

16. Why do you think Grandfather mentions his soldiering years so much?

**Chapters 21-24**

17. At the time, no one really knows the true cause of the yellow fever epidemic. What are some of the possible causes suggested by various townspeople and doctors?

18. In your opinion, what role has technology played in finding causes and cure for the disease?

19. Authors sometimes subject their characters to difficult tasks. What are two tasks Matilda accomplishes?

20. When Matilda reunites with Eliza, she was very busy. What was Eliza doing?

21. Do you think Mother is alive? What are two events in the story that lead you to believe this way?

**Chapters 24-Epilogue**

22. Throughout the book, Matilda and her mother never say they love each other, yet we know they do. What evidence is there in the story that the two feel deeply for each other. Provide at least two specific examples.

23. Matilda changes a great deal from the beginning of the novel to the end. Give three specific examples of those changes.

24. During the story, the people of Philadelphia face many dangers, including the risks of disease, starvation, robbery, and assault. Describe a dramatic incident in which Matilda faces one of these dangers and point out the personal qualities that help her survive.

25. How would Matilda’s life have changed if Mrs. Cook had stayed healthy and remained with her daughter at all times during the story?

26. What is your opinion of Matilda’s decision to make Eliza a partner in the Cook Coffeehouse?